

REMARKS

The Office Action of July 29, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully considered. The rejections are respectfully traversed for the reasons discussed below.

Section 6 of the Office Action rejects independent claims 1 and 2 (along with two dependent claims) for obviousness on the basis of four references (which will hereafter be called Hunt, Garback, Rangan, and Vance). Before proceeding to a detailed discussion of why the references would not have led an ordinarily skilled person to the inventions defined by claims 1 and 2, it is appropriate to note that the mere number of references that have been cited in an attempt to meet the limitations of the independent claims suggest that these references have been inappropriately combined in the rejections. Just how likely is it that an ordinarily skilled person who wanted to improve something disclosed in the first reference would modify this "something" in accordance with the second reference, and then modify the modification in accordance with the third reference, and finally modify the modified modification in accordance with the fourth reference?

At the bottom of page 5 of the Office Action and top of page 6, the Office Action refers to the previous Office Action for motivations for combining three of the references, and asserts that it would have been obvious to modify this combination-of-three yet again "with the motivations of providing a corporate travel planning and management system which operates on a corporate database environment that allows automated travel planning from a corporate traveler's desktop, pre-travel decision support to inform a corporation of planned travel expenditures before corporate dollars are spent." One problem with these alleged motivations is that there is no reason to suspect that an

ordinarily skilled person would feel that the Hunt-Garback-Rangan combination (even assuming, for sake of argument, that these three references are themselves properly combined) lacks the features that would have allegedly motivate an ordinarily skilled person to turn to Vance. Another problem with the alleged motivations is that any number of modifications in the Hunt-Garback-Rangan combination might be said to enhance "a corporate travel planning and management system which operates on a corporate database environment that allows automated travel planning from a corporate traveler's desktop, pre-travel decision support to inform a corporation of planned travel expenditures before corporate dollars are spent." There is nothing in the Office Action to tie these alleged motivations to the specific changes in the Hunt-Garback-Rangan combination that is proposed in the Office Action. One cannot escape the conclusion that the rejections are based on an attempted hindsight reconstruction of the invention based on bits and pieces extracted from the prior art without any particular reason for doing so.

Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

In addition to being based on an attempted hindsight reconstruction of the invention, it is respectfully submitted that the Office Action incorrectly interprets and applies the references for the reasons discussed below.

One feature of the system disclosed in the present application is that a personal computer (PC) and a net server play their respective roles to configure a booking system (method) which is distinct from and non-obvious over the prior art.

More specifically, Applicant's PC (22) and the net server (21) play their respective roles as follows:

- (i) The net server (21) sends or supplies home page addresses of external reservation systems to the PC (22). (In this

regard, please refer to the paragraph of claim 1, “sending home page addresses ...”).

(ii) The PC (22) completes a booking on the website by directly communicating a selected external reservation system. (Please refer to the paragraphs of claim 1, “connecting said personal computer ...” and “completing a booking ...”).

(iii) The net server (21) transmits the booking number to an issuing terminal to allow the issuing terminal to issue the booked ticket. (Please refer to the paragraph of claim 1, “storing ... and sending said booking number ...”).

In contrast, the Hunt reference discloses a reservation system in which a server computer (14) communicates with an external reservation system to perform a booking in response to a command from a client computer (column 2, lines 16-20). In other words, a PC does not communicate with an external reservation system.

With regard to the Garback reference, the terminal 22 communicates with a travel planning system (central system) 10, which is connected to one or more external reservation systems (see Garback's Figure 1). The terminal 22 sends a request, or filled format on the screen 71 (see Figure 3) to the central system 10. Therefore, Garback does not anticipate or suggest the present invention, in which the PC completes a booking on the website of an external reservation system (i.e., without the aid of the net server) to send the booking data to the net server (21). (In this regard, please refer to the paragraphs of claim 1, “completing a booking ...” and “generating, ... and sending the booking data ...”).

Further, the Rangan reference discloses booking of a ticket on a website. However, the present invention was made to overcome the problem that booking and issuing procedures were complicated in prior art in-house or corporate booking systems. As described in the Description of the Related Art section of the present application, that

problem is not solved even if a ticket is booked via the internet (page 3, line 16 – page 4, line 1).

As described above, a primary feature of the present invention lies in the combination of a PC and a net server, which play their respective roles to configure an in-house booking system. Even if Rangan discloses a stand-alone computer which performs booking on the internet, the present invention is not obvious from the cited references.

According to the present invention, a PC can complete a booking on the website of an external reservations system. Therefore, the net server does not need to assist the PC in the booking operation with the external reservation system, as in the conventional corporate booking system. Accordingly, the present invention can provide an in-house or corporate booking system which makes it easier to book and issue tickets. Additionally, the present invention can provide a booking system in which the workload of the net server is greatly reduced. The cited references do not anticipate or suggest the present invention, alone or in combination.

Independent claim 2 recites “sending means for sending home page addresses of said reservation systems …”, “transmitting and receiving means for connecting said personal computer to a website of the selected external reservation system …, and for transmitting and receiving data including a booking number without the aid of said net server …”, and “generating means for generating, in said personal computer, booking data of a predetermined format … and sending the booking data of the predetermined format to said net server …”. For reasons along the lines discussed above with respect to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these features are not suggested by the cited references.

Since the remaining claims depend from the independent claims discussed above and recite additional limitations to further define the invention, they are patentable along with their independent claims and need not be further discussed.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Allen Wood
Registration No. 28,134
Customer No. 23995
(202) 326-0222
(202) 408-0924 (facsimile)
(202) 408-5297 (facsimile)

AW:rw